

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-4, 6-8, 10 and 11 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his rejections in view of the amendments set forth above and remarks set forth below.

Allowable Subject Matter

It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner considers the subject matter of claims 5, 9 and 10 as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Although not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejections, claim 1 has been rewritten to include the limitations of claims 5 and claim 8 has been rewritten to include the limitations of claim 9. Accordingly, all of the claims are now in condition for allowance.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-4, 6-8, and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Kawahara (JP 10-66301) in view of Takahashi (JP 6-284637). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

By way of the present amendment, Applicants have canceled claim 7 rendering this part of the rejection moot. Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitations of claim 5 and amended claim 8 to include the limitations of claim 9. Accordingly as indicated by the Examiner, the rejection of these claims is overcome due to the allowability of the limitations that were previously present in claims 5 and 9. Dependent claims 2-4, 6, 10 and 11 are likewise allowable based on their dependency from these allowable independent claims.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks, it is believed that the claims clearly distinguish over the patents relied on by the Examiner, either alone or in combination. In view of this, reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of all the claims are respectfully requested.

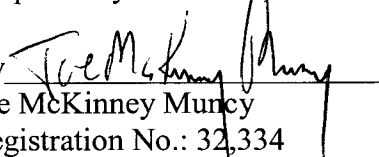
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert F. Gnuse (Reg. No. 27,295) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By



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